

**For more information:**

**Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

[www.mass.gov/dph/tick](http://www.mass.gov/dph/tick)

1-888-658-2850

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.CDC.gov/Lyme](http://www.CDC.gov/Lyme)



**Scituate Board of Health**

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Scituate, MA 02066

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[www.scituatema.gov/board-of-health](http://www.scituatema.gov/board-of-health)

# What You Need to Know About Lyme Disease in Scituate



Photo by Sean McCarthy

**Town of Scituate  
Board of Health**

This brochure has been created on behalf of the Scituate Board of Health by:

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As a project for *Community Health Nursing*,  
*Curry College, Plymouth Campus*

## Did you know?

- ◆ Lyme disease is spread by the bite of an infected deer tick, usually by small immature ticks called nymphs. The nymph is the size of a poppy seed.
- ◆ Scituate's land use is quite diverse. Beaches, woodlands, and residential areas all may provide a habitat in which ticks may be present.
- ◆ No matter who you are or what activities you prefer, you may come in contact with disease carrying ticks.
- ◆ You may be exposed to Lyme disease while walking your dog at the beach, hiking in the woods, golfing at your favorite course, working outside, or gardening in your own backyard.
- ◆ Because children spend a lot of time playing outside during organized activities or in their own backyard, they are at particular risk. Joint pain is common among children that have become infected with Lyme disease.
- ◆ It is possible to be exposed to or contract Lyme disease at any time of year.
- ◆ Lyme disease is on the rise, nationally and in Scituate. Lyme disease was first reported in Scituate in 1998. In 2013, there were 71 reported cases in Scituate.

Reported by Scituate Board of Health



## Helpful tips:

- ◆ Your best defense against contracting Lyme disease is to reduce your exposure. There is no preventative vaccine.
- ◆ Exposure is most likely in wooded areas and where the woods meet residential yards, or where there are tall grasses or leaf litter.
- ◆ To reduce your chance of exposure, limit time in tick infested areas. Check yourself, loved ones, and pets daily for ticks. Use insect repellent appropriately for yourself and your pets. Change clothes and shower after being in areas where ticks may thrive.
- ◆ Many Scituate residents share their homes with dogs. Protect your pets by using tick prevention measures recommended by their veterinarian. Protecting them also protects your family. Ticks can hitch a ride indoors with your pets, so be sure to check pets when they come inside.
- ◆ Contact your health care provider if you are bitten by a tick, develop a rash, or experience any signs of illness associated with tick exposure.

[cdc.gov/lyme](http://cdc.gov/lyme) Scituate Board of Health

## Lyme Disease Signs and Symptoms

It is important to diagnose and treat Lyme disease quickly. There is no built up immunity to Lyme disease. It must be treated every time there is a diagnosis.

**Early Localized Stage Symptoms** are similar to those of other ailments and appear 3 to 30 days after an infecting tick bite.

- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Chills and fever
- ◆ Joint pain
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Bull's-eye rash, although this is not always observed

**Early Disseminated Stage Symptoms** occur days to weeks after an infecting tick bite.

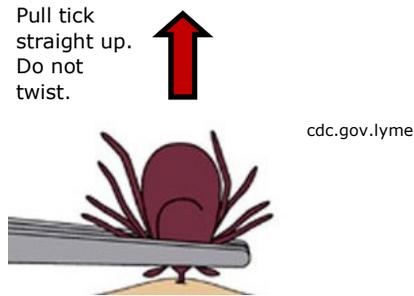
- ◆ Arthritis, or joint pain and swelling
- ◆ Heart rhythm irregularities
- ◆ Severe headache and neck stiffness
- ◆ Chronic feeling of fatigue
- ◆ Bell's palsy (loss of facial muscle tone)

**Late Disseminated Stage Symptoms** appear months to years after becoming infected if left untreated. Symptoms include arthritis, especially in the knees, shooting pain, numbness, and short-term memory problems. [cdc.gov/lyme](http://cdc.gov/lyme)



## What if I find a tick attached?

Use fine tipped tweezers to grab the tick as close to your skin as possible, without squeezing the tick. **DO NOT** use nail polish, Vaseline, or a hot match on the tick. This can cause the tick to release more bacteria into you. Once removed, wash the area and your hands with warm soapy water. Alcohol or another antiseptic may also be used. Notify your health care provider.

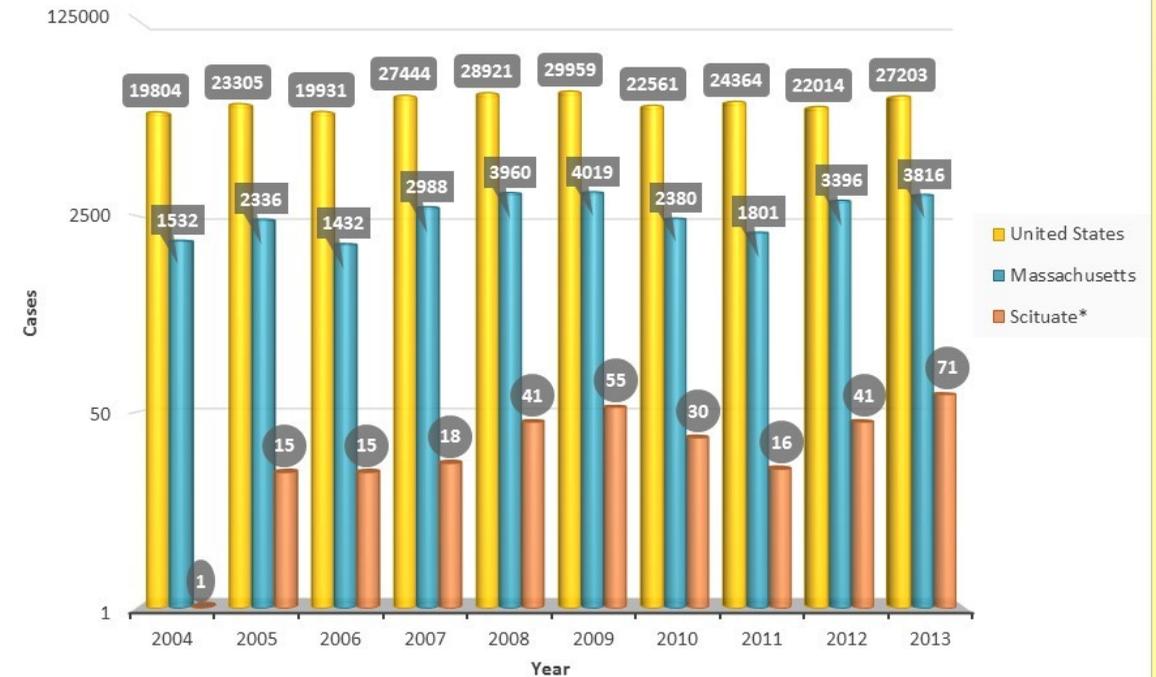


There are several ways to discourage ticks from residing in your yard. Landscapers and home gardeners can create an inhospitable environment for ticks by removing leaf litter, tall grass, and brush from yards and recreational fields. A barrier of wood chips or gravel between the lawn and woods makes travel difficult for ticks. Deer also act as hosts for ticks. Discouraging deer from visiting your yard can reduce potential tick exposure for adults, children, and pets. Constructing a fence or planting deer-resistant plants, such as those listed to the right, are two ways of doing so.

Photo by Cheryl King



## Reported/confirmed cases of Lyme disease, in Scituate, Massachusetts, and the United States 2004-2013



\*2011 data through September, converted to electronic system

[cdc.gov/lyme/stats](http://cdc.gov/lyme/stats); Scituate Board of Health

## Deer-Resistant Plants

### Annuals

Alyssum  
Marigold  
Nasturtium  
Pansy  
Sage  
Spiderflower  
Verbena

### Perennials

Beebalm  
Bleeding Heart  
Columbine  
Daffodil  
Foxglove  
Hyacinth  
Iris

### ...Perennials

Mountain Mints  
Poppy  
Silvermound  
Snowdrops  
Yarrow

### Shrubs and Vines

American Holly  
Andromeda  
Boxwood  
Butterfly Bush  
Leucothoe  
Spice Bush  
Sumac  
Weigala